

Remarks

Claims 1 and 3-20 remain in this application.

Claim 4 has been placed in independent form and is therefore in full condition for allowance as provisionally indicated in the last Office Action.

Claim 5 has been placed in independent form and is therefore in condition for allowance as provisionally indicated in the last Office Action.

Claim 7 has been placed in independent form and is therefore in condition for allowance as provisionally indicated in the last Office Action. In the second line of claim 7, "couple bale" has been changed to --couple the bale--.

Independent claims 1 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Tilley '461. Independent claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tilley '461 in view of Strosser et al. '675. However, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of these claims, as amended by the present response to the Office Action, is not shown or suggested by the art of record.

It will be noted in this respect that Tilley '461 discloses a bale pickup and loading platform 21 having no means except gravity to pass the picked up bale from the loading platform 21 to the main accumulating platform 14. Once the picked up bale is under the control of the loading platform 21, the platform 21 must be raised up to an upwardly inclined position as illustrated in Fig. 4 of Tilley '461 to enable the bale 24 to gravitate down onto the main accumulating platform 14. Thereafter, bale 24 may be pushed rearwardly by a pusher 18 located only on the accumulating platform.

In contrast, amended claim 1 requires, among other things, "a sliding mechanism operable on both the loading platform and the accumulating platform for moving bales from the loading platform onto the accumulating platform when the loading platform is in its raised position." This feature is illustrated, for example in Figs. 1 and 2 of the drawings associated with the present application wherein both the loading platform 20 and the accumulating platform 16 have sliding mechanism 26 that operates to move bales from loading platform to accumulating platform 16 when loading platform 20 is horizontally disposed.

As noted above, neither Tilley '461 nor any of the other cited references discloses or even remotely suggests this feature. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 as amended is in full condition for allowance, along with its dependent claims 3, 6 and 8-14 which set forth further details of the present invention not shown or suggested by the art or record.

Independent method claim 15 has been amended to include the step of "engaging a sliding mechanism on the loading platform and the accumulating platform when the loading platform is in its horizontal position to move the bale from the loading platform onto the accumulating platform to locate the bale on the accumulating platform." None of the cited references shows or suggests this step. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 is in full condition for allowance, along with its dependent claims 16-19.

Independent claim 20 is directed to a computer program product for implementing within a computer system a method for handling bales. The computer program product includes computer readable medium for providing computer program code means utilized to implement the method. Among other things, the executable code of the computer program code means is adapted for implementing the step of "selectively engaging a sliding mechanism to move the bale from the loading platform onto the accumulating platform to locate the bale on the accumulating platform." Inasmuch as this step is not disclosed or suggested by Tilley '461 or Strosser et al., it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tilley '461 in view of Strosser et al. should be reconsidered and removed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all remaining claims in this application are in full condition for allowance. Forwarding of formal notice of such allowance is respectfully requested.

Any additional fee which might be due in connection with this application should be applied against our Deposit Account No. 19-0522.

Respectfully submitted,

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(Docket No. 33338)